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Sen. Margaret Smith Denounces Kennedy

From The Telegram
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Senator Margaret Chase Smith, R-Maine, charged last night that President Kennedy has repeatedly reversed his 1960 campaign pledges and has given the nation "neither greatness nor leadership."

In a scathing analysis of the Kennedy record, the Maine Senator told 800 Republican women gathered here for a spring conference: "He has not been a strong President that he has led, for what strength he has displayed has been in words — eloquent, brave and inspiring words, only to be followed by no action or by timid action."

"Ticking off more than 100 instances of Kennedy 'reversals' as President from his 'promises' as a candidate, Senator Smith characterized the Kennedy record as 'The Kennedy twist — a rhythm in reverse action.'"

Details Charges

She detailed campaign statements on the B70 bomber, impounding of defense funds by the executive, federal judgeship appointments, interest rates, appointees staying on the job, nepotism, secrecy in government, prestige polls, the missile gap, personal diplomacy and summitry, the nation's rate of growth, Cuba, Laos and references to a "lack of leadership" on the part of his predecessor.

Maine's senior senator, who served with Kennedy in the Senate and who is credited with helping Vice President Nixon carry Maine with her own sweeping re-election victory in 1960, said she did not intend her remarks to be "personal" or to reflect any "unfriendly spirit." Instead, she said she feels the Republican party has a responsibility to cite the factual record and to remind the President of "what he has not done on his promises and representations to the people."

Senator Smith said Kennedy "very strong words" in castigation of the Eisenhower administration and, by so doing, won the Presidency. She then examined some of them closely.

San Diego Speech

On the B70 bomber issue, she said, "when he was seeking the votes of B70 aircraft workers," candidate Kennedy told a San Diego audience on Nov. 2, 1960: "I wholeheartedly endorse the B70 manned aircraft." She said his speech was "a direct attack on the Eisenhower administration for rejecting the proposed B70 program" but that last month

at his press conference, President Kennedy also rejected production of the B70.

Before the VFW Convention in 1960, Senator Smith said, candidate Kennedy attacked President Eisenhower for "freezing" defense money voted by Congress, "yet just as soon as he got in office, he impounded defense funds and refused to spend them."

She quoted a speech in Bangor, Maine on Sept. 2, 1960 in which, she said, candidate Kennedy made an obvious appeal to Republican voters by saying he would favor men for positions of high leadership, regardless of whether they happened to have the word "Democrat" after their name. She said he also wrote the President of the American Bar Association decrying the fact that federal judges had been appointed according to their political affiliation. As of March 12, she said, the President had named 111 new lifetime federal judges, all of them Democrats, although he has made three or four Republican judgeship appointments since then.

Cuba 'Fiasco' Cited

Referring to the Cuban "fiasco" which, she said dropped American prestige to an all-time low under President Kennedy, Senator Smith declared, "His administration ordered the prestige polls abolished as contrasted to his demands as candidate Kennedy that they be made public. This time the Kennedy twist had a Cuban beat."

Less than three weeks after Kennedy became President, the Secretary of Defense revealed there was no missile gap. She called this a "politically expedient myth, now dumped in the bonnyard of the tall-guy Central Intelligence Agency."

Personal Diplomacy and Summitry — Senator Smith said candidate Kennedy spoke out against it but shortly after becoming President, he went to Austria for a "Viennese Waltz" with Premier Khrushchev.

Tractor Deal

Cuba — Senator Smith recalled a candidate Kennedy statement that 'we must attempt to strengthen anti-Castro forces in exile' and his criticism that these forces had had no support from our government. When he became President, she said, "he called off the air support they needed subsequent 'tractors for freedom deal that fell through' as both 'pitiful and degrading'."